

Please Vote for Reconsideration on Article 29

Why Reconsideration?

I am asking Town Meeting to reconsider the vote on Article 29 in light of new information and incorrect statements that were made during the initial presentation and questions.

What is the New Information?

I rose during the initial discussion noting the lack of documentation in support of the article. I asked for at least a description of the land, and was told that it was a hilly 4,882 sq. ft. parcel. In response to another question with regards to redevelopment of the site, we were told that there was an existing house that was being repaired, but that was all.

After the meeting, I met with the Town Manager, and he showed my colleagues and me the plans that were the basis of determining the value of the easement. It was readily apparent that the land in question was not as described during the discussion. The manager admitted his error and indicated he would make a statement to that effect at the start of the next session. I requested and was granted reconsideration, and asked the manager and attorney for copies of the plans.

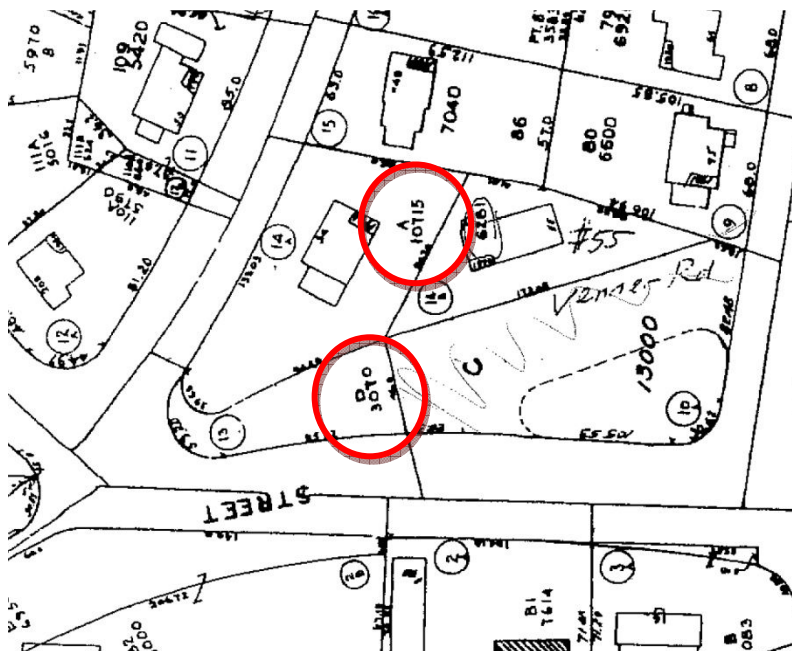
What are the Facts about the Property?

The following property description is from the current deed (Book: 65878, Page: 207, Date: 08/07/2015) on record with the Southern Middlesex Registry of Deeds:

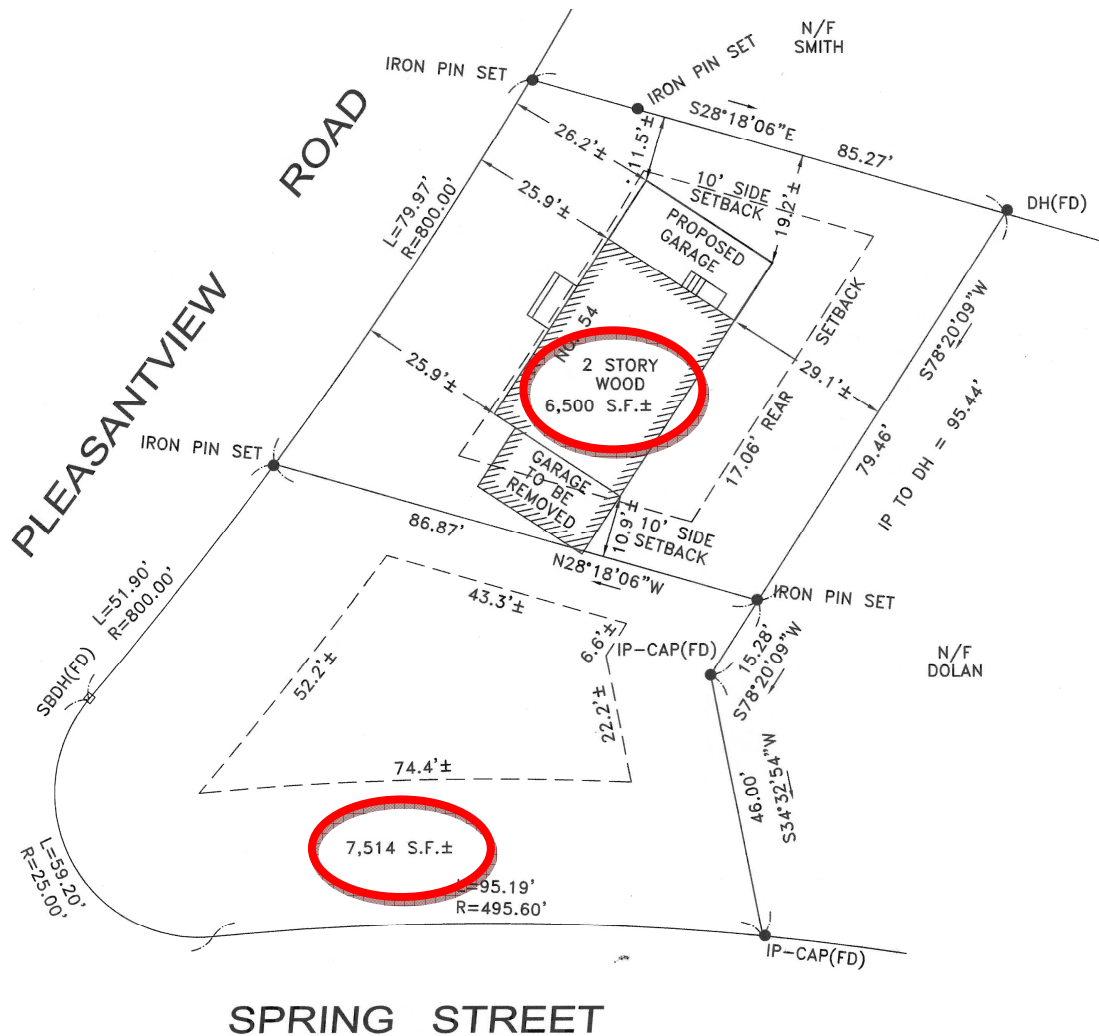
[A] certain parcel of land with the buildings thereon being shown as Lot A on a plan of land in Arlington, Mass., owned now or formerly by the Fellman Realty Trust, dated January, 1946, ... [c]ontaining 10,715 square feet of land according to said plan.

Also, a certain parcel of land in said Arlington, bounded and described as follows ... [t]he above described premises are shown as Lot D on a "Plan of Land in Arlington, Mass." Dated May 1952, ... containing 3070 square feet of land according to said plan.

These descriptions Align with the plan below provided by the Town Manager:



But if you now look at the plan displayed at Wednesday's meeting, the boundary has been redrawn, and the two lots are now 6,500 square feet and 7,514 square feet respectively:



At these sizes, both lots can be developed by right.

Why Should Town Meeting Consider Reconsideration?

1. Town Meeting was given incomplete information, and was unable to reach a considered opinion regarding the release of the easement. The only information provided was the recommended vote provided by the Board of Selectmen. The proponent of the article did not request to address the meeting. The only substantive presentation was by the Town Manager.
2. Town Meeting was given incorrect information by the Town Manager. To his credit, the Town Manager did own up to the errors, but that was after the vote was complete. As can be clearly seen in the plan above, the proponent is dividing the lot so another building could be constructed.
3. The size of the lots were incorrectly provided on Monday. I had asked and it was confirmed that the combined area of the lots was only 4,882 square feet. However, that is only the size of the easement to be released. As is shown above, the actual combined area of the lots is 14,014 sq. ft.

It is my contention that Town Meeting was denied the opportunity to properly debate this article due to the reasons listed above. A motion for reconsideration is debatable, but only so far as it relates to the decision to reconsider. In order to allow Town Meeting to have a fair and open debate on the merits of granting the easement, a positive vote for reconsideration must pass first.

Why Does This Matter?

This is a matter of principle. Honest debate leads to better outcomes. In this case, it might very well lead to the same outcome, but how we get there matters. Given the new information, it is possible we would come to a different conclusion. Without having the debate, how will we know.

I ask that you consider whether this article received a fair and unbiased presentation and debate when it was presented to Town Meeting. If you don't believe that is the case, then please consider voting for reconsideration to allow for the discussion of what was really before us. If you do believe that the first presentation was fair and unbiased, please consider giving your fellow members who don't agree the opportunity to debate this article again. All I ask is that you don't vote against this motion in the name of expediency. Our body is intended to deliberate, and we should do that fairly, openly, and well-informed.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Christian Klein', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christian Klein
TMM 10